



October 3, 2013
MINUTES
Lorton Workhouse Arts Center

Commissioners in attendance: Lisa Alderman, Willie Dell, Charles Ellis, Tina Lea, Sharron Kitchen Miller, Marcia Neuhaus Speck, Marcia Thalhimer, Ann Bondurant Trinkle.

Commissioners absent: Ann Edwards Rust

Staff Present: Foster Billingsley, Tiffany Glass Ferreira, Cathy Welborn, Jenny Wortham

Introduction

Lisa Alderman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

John Mason, President and CEO of Lorton Workhouse Arts Center welcomed the Commission and gave a brief history and update on the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center.

Ann Bondurant Trinkle made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 12-13, 2013 meeting. Marcia Neuhaus Speck asked that a change be made to the minutes to reflect that she and Dr. Gwendolyn Everett spoke by phone with John Mason of the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center.

Ann Bondurant Trinkle made a second motion to approve the minutes of the June 12-13, 2013 with the recommended change. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

2013-2014 Grants Budget:

Foster Billingsley reviewed the 2013-2014 grants budget.

The Commission approved at its June 2013 meeting an appropriation of \$90,000 for the Cultural / Arts Tourism Marketing Program. The Commission and Tourism Corporation awarded \$40,727 in August 2013 to seven grantees. The remaining \$49,273 was reallocated to the following grant programs: \$10,000 transferred to the technical assistance grant program and \$39, 273 transferred to the presenter touring program for rural areas of Virginia.

2014 – 2015 Grant Guidelines:

Foster Billingsley presented the staff recommendations for the 2014-2015 grant guidelines. The changes / updates for the grant guidelines came from information collected from grantees, panelists, Commissioners and an on-line survey. The staff also included items to reflect the Commission's 2013-2015 strategic plan.

A number of suggestions were made for improvements in the wording of the guidelines.

Foster Billingsley presented the timeline for the 2014-2015 grant guidelines. The Commission staff will incorporate the changes from the Commissioners. The guidelines will be sent to the Commissioners for review. After incorporating any additional Commissioner changes the draft guidelines will be made available for public view. The grant guidelines will be voted on at the December 4, 2013 Commission meeting.

Arts Council of the Valley Appeal:

Foster Billingsley explained that the Arts Council of the Valley requested that the Commission reconsider its decision from the June 2013 Commission meeting regarding its general operating support application.

The Commission reviewed the appeal letter that was submitted by the Arts Council on July 8, 2013; the panel comments and grant application. It was unanimously decided that the Arts Council of the Valley did not warrant an appeal based on the Commission's appeal criteria.

Marcia Thalhimer made a motion to uphold the Commission's decision on the Arts Council of the Valley's 2013-2014 general operating support application. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Peninsula Fine Arts Center:

Foster Billingsley and Sharron Kitchen Miller led the discussion of the merger between the Peninsula Fine Arts Center (PFAC) and Christopher Newport University. The Commission awarded PFAC a General Operating Support grant for fiscal year 2013-2014. The first payment was withheld until the Commission received more information about the merger.

After lengthy discussion and review of the proposed merger timeline, it was recommended that PFAC submit quarterly reports updating the status of the merger and the grant will be paid out in quarterly payments upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

Charles Ellis made a motion that PFAC submit quarterly reports to the Commission with payments being made following the Executive Committee's review of the quarterly reports. The motion was seconded and approved. Sharron Kitchen Miller abstained from the vote.

2014-2015 Tour Directory:

Marcia Thalhimer stated that the panel was thorough and well prepared. The seriousness with which the panelists took their job was inspiring.

Foster Billingsley presented the panel and staff recommendations on the applications to be listed in the 2014-2015 Tour Directory.

The advisory panel could not agree on whether **The Conciliation Project** should be included in the 2014-2015 Tour Directory and recommended that the Commission board decide if **The Conciliation Project** should be included.

The application did not include enough information on how the educational aspects of the program would be handled at the performance. The application lacked detail on who the performers were and if they were professional or college students. The budget submitted with the application also lacked detail.

Tina Lea made a motion that **The Conciliation Project** not be included in the 2014-2015 Tour Directory. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Sharron Kitchen Miller made a motion to approve the rest of the staff recommendations for the 2014-2015 Tour Directory. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Cultural / Arts Tourism Marketing Program:

Foster Billingsley presented the panel decision on the Cultural / Arts Tourism Marketing Program. Sharron Kitchen Miller, Marcia Thalhimer and Jenny Wortham attended the panel meeting and reviewed the grant applications. Sharron Kitchen Miller thought the scoring and comments between the Commission and Virginia Tourism Corporation was consistent. Marcia Thalhimer said that one of the requirements for this grant program is to have overnight stays in hotels. This is a difficult benchmark for most arts organizations to fulfill.

The Commission discussed the future of this grant program. The Commission and the Tourism Corporation made many changes in this year's application but still had a low response to the revised grant program. Foster Billingsley said that the partnership between the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the Virginia Tourism Corporation is important and should continue. The Virginia Tourism Corporation is scheduled to attend the Commission's December 4, 2013 meeting to discuss the future of the Cultural / Arts Tourism Marketing Program.

News from Around the State:

Virginia Opera Association: Lisa Alderman gave an update on a meeting with Russell Allen and Howard Bender with Virginia Opera Association and Lisa Alderman, Foster Billingsley and Tina Lea.

Virginia Opera Association is being proactive how they are addressing its deficit. Russell Allen provided to the Commission a detailed financial plan with benchmarks. Through leveraged and foundation funding, they are generating new revenue and showing some progress in fundraising. The organization hired a new Development Director for its Richmond and Northern Virginia offices.

Wayside Foundation for the Arts: Foster Billingsley gave an update on Wayside Foundation for the Arts. Its Artistic Director departed and the organization went out of business in July 2013 without notifying the Commission. Foster Billingsley is seeking the advice of the Attorney General's Office to recover the first payment on the organization's 2013-2014 general operating support grant.

Firehouse Theatre: Marcia Thalhimer and Foster Billingsley gave an update on Firehouse Theatre. The organization has appointed its interim Artistic Director as the permanent Artistic Director. A consultant was hired to help the board with the transition that started last fall and with its issues within the Richmond theatre community.

New Business:

- Education Secretary Laura Fornash accepted a new position with the University of Virginia. She will start her new position in November 2013. An interim Secretary of Education has not been appointed. The Commission is one of the agencies under the Secretary of Education.
- Foster Billingsley announced that, with the prior approval of the Executive Committee, the Commission will no longer print its presenter tour directory. For many years the Commission staff has directed people to the tour directory on-line with great success. This move will save the Commission \$7,000 that can be used to develop more on-line resources for grantees.

The Commission staff will create a postcard that will be sent to the artists / ensembles in the tour directory and presenters notifying them that the Commission will no longer be printing a hard copy of the tour directory. The staff will also notify people through email list-serves, Facebook and Twitter.

- Lisa Alderman, Foster Billingsley and Jenny Wortham will be attending the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies Leadership Conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming from October 15 – 18, 2013.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:49pm.